



Washington State Department of Agriculture *Hearing Notice*

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WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

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Hearings slated for enhanced chemigation and fertigation standards

OLYMPIA — Anyone who applies pesticides or fertilizers through an irrigation system will have a chance to comment on proposed changes to the state Department of Agriculture's "chemigation" and "fertigation" rules at one of four public hearings held across the state. The proposed changes improve ground water protection and update chemigation and fertigation rules to better reflect industry practices. Public hearings will be held in the following locations:

- **Olympia:** 1 p.m. April 24, Room 259, Natural Resources Building, 1111 Washington St.
- **Yakima:** 6:30 p.m. May 1, Room 238, Department of Agriculture, Yakima office, 21 North First Ave.
- **Pasco:** 6:30 p.m. May 2, Gjerde Multipurpose Center, sections 1 and 4, Columbia Basin College, 2600 North 20th Ave.
- **Moses Lake:** 6:30 p.m. May 3 in the auditorium of Building 1400, Big Bend Community College, 7662 Chanute St.

The proposed requirements shift the decade-old rules from equipment-specific to performance-based criteria, allowing for changes in technology over time. Some of the recommended changes include application tank placement requirements and tank size limitations, monitoring requirements for chemigation and fertigation applications near sensitive areas, and mixing and loading limitations near water sources.

"The old rules required specific backflow prevention devices on all chemigation and fertigation systems but did not allow for attributes of system design or progression in technology," says Tom Hoffmann, chemigation and fertigation technical assistance specialist. "I think these revised rules make more sense for farmers and the environmental community alike."

Program staff worked with a Technical Advisory Committee made up of growers, irrigation equipment and agricultural chemical suppliers, an environmental representative, and federal and state government representatives. The

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committee spent a year and a half reviewing the old rules and developing recommendations for changes. Committee members worked towards clarifying regulatory requirements for growers, transitioning requirements to allow for changes in application technology, establishing time and size limitations for the in-field placement of application tanks, and furthering ground water protection with monitoring requirements and setback restrictions.

For a copy of the proposed rules, call Laurie Mauerman at (360) 902-2012. Send written comments to: Washington State Department of Agriculture, Pesticide Management Division, P.O. Box 42589, Olympia, WA 98504-2589. Comments may be sent by FAX to (360) 902-2093 or e-mail Laurie Mauerman at lmauerman@agr.wa.gov. Comments must be received by May 3.

Information on Agriculture's Chemigation and Fertigation Technical Assistance Program is available on the Internet at www.wa.gov/agr/pmd/water/index.htm or by calling Tom Hoffmann at (509) 766-2574 or Byron Fitch at (509) 766-2575.

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